

*To promote and facilitate the protection of sustainable populations of kiwi in Taranaki*



**CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENT—JANUARY 2007**



North Island brown kiwi continue to face an uphill battle because of the pressure from predators and habitat loss. We are making progress though, because of commitment and support from a whole range of groups across the country. I want to acknowledge our key sponsors (see their logos in this newsletter) and would encourage Friends of Taranaki Kiwi to support them where possible.

Maybe you can be tourists in your own country this summer by supporting ventures and places that are helping TKT protect Taranaki kiwi, especially Bushy Park near Wanganui (a kiwi crèche site), Kiwi Encounter at Rainbow Springs, Rotorua (the hatchery for Operation

Nest Egg 'ONE' chicks), and of course, Egmont National Park (the home of newly-released ONE kiwi chicks).

2007 will bring some exciting developments in biodiversity and kiwi protection in Taranaki. Of note is the Rotokare Scenic Reserve Sanctuary Project that is being fenced as you read this. This is not a TKT programme, but it definitely has our support and it will benefit kiwi recovery.

Our Trust intends to initiate several new volunteer-based projects and maintain progress on our kiwi conservation, advocacy and education programmes. Our new TET-funded technical adviser, Kris Grabow, is making great progress and relishing kiwi conservation work, and our BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust-funded kiwi ranger Sid Marsh is continuing his expert efforts in the field.

This year will also bring some interesting results from research, especially that being carried out at Tongariro. A field experiment is testing whether large-scale poisoning operations can help a cohort of kiwi chicks to get through to adulthood free from predators. We need new tools to manage pests across vast tracts of forest and the early results look promising. Trapping networks like the 7500ha grid in place in Egmont National Park are effective but they are a pretty expensive way to control predators. The Trust is also looking forward to results of multi-species pest control research being undertaken by the Department of Conservation and Landcare Research. We want to be sure that control of stoats to protect kiwi is not having a flow-on negative effect on other species, for example though unexpected increases in rat numbers.

The Trust faces the ongoing challenge of raising more funds to continue all the strands of our work — education, advocacy, dog training to protect kiwi, predator trapping (in partnership with DOC, and separately, with private landowners), and Operation Nest Egg. Thank you to all who gave grants, donations, or volunteered in 2006 — we really appreciate your support. *Jenny Steven, TKT Chair*



**The Taranaki Electricity Trust generously supports the Taranaki Kiwi Trust**



**TKT Fundraiser**

Navy blue polo shirts with an embroidered TKT logo are available from **Kiwi Outdoors** on Ariki Street, New Plymouth. In child and adult sizes.

Child	\$35
Adult	\$45



A gentle reminder: For those of you who sponsor trap boxes and trap clearing as part of the Egmont National Park Kiwi Conservation Programme, we encourage you to please make an annual contribution so we can meet the target of 18 trap checks each year across the 7500ha Egmont National Park trapping network. The form is on page 5—thank you for your generosity.



## EDUCATION REPORT

Several schools took advantage of TKT resources in Terms 3 and 4 when they were studying kiwi in Taranaki.

Urenui seniors spent the whole of Term 3 on kiwi as one study focus and were really creative with their models of kiwi. They were particularly interested in designing and making traps which they would like to put in the bush near the school to try and control predators. Great going Urenui!

Vogeltown School invited TKT to speak to all levels, Senior, Middle and Junior, about kiwi in Taranaki as part of their Taranaki studies. That was over 250 students! Students in the Middle school shared some excellent research reports about kiwi with us and we arranged for some of their art work to be displayed at Puke Ariki.

And the Eco School of Lepperton amazed us by raising \$65 to sponsor a predator trap following our talk about kiwi on the mountain. This is a school with a roll of eight 5 and 6 year olds! A big thank you goes to those students and their parents for their support of TKT and their efforts on behalf of kiwi survival in Taranaki.



*Eco School group with Cupid*

It's great to know there are increasing numbers of students in Taranaki who know about kiwi, the threats they face and how THEY might help our national icon survive. We're hoping more Taranaki schools and groups will include kiwi in their studies soon and we're keen to support them with resources and talks. Contact Carolyn at [schools@taranakikiwi.org](mailto:schools@taranakikiwi.org)

**Sponsors Needed:** As part of our education programme in primary schools we have started donating a copy of 'Predators in NZ', a Reed publication, to the school library following our talk, as reinforcement of the messages about predators. Would anyone like to help fund these as a specially-targeted donation? It would be under \$20 per copy.



## TKT COMMUNITY KIWI PROGRAMME

### Bridson's Stoat Trapping Project

The first project up and running in the Trust's Community Kiwi Programme (CKP) is at Ann and Sid Bridson's property at Mangarewa, East Taranaki. The programme is a trap-loan and set-up scheme. It supports landowners who wish to protect kiwi on private land. The aim is to catch stoats, to reduce predation pressure on young kiwi.

In mid-November, three trustees (Cees, Murray and Barry) with Kris met the Bridsons and after a briefing session and trap-set training we loaded the trap boxes on to quad trailers and spread out along several farm tracks, dropping the traps at appropriate intervals for others to set as they followed.

This was a whole-day effort with 15km of trap lines (around 140 traps) set. These will be checked by the landowners, mostly during routine farm operations, and the results recorded for their own and the Trust's records.



*Setting out the traps on Ann and Sid Bridson's Farm*

Thanks to Ann and Sid for their effort, cooperation, home baking and coffee. Three more projects are in the pipeline — we're all just waiting for some dry weather for safe access along papa tracks and a break in very busy farm schedules. Our Community Kiwi Programme is funded by the TSB Community Trust.

**TSB Community Trust**



The TSB Community Trust generously supports the Taranaki Kiwi Trust



## BEING A VOLUNTEER KIWI EGG CHAUFFEUR

As one who volunteered to drive eggs to Rotorua for the TKT/DOC Operation Nest Egg programme I didn't really know what to expect. So – Sid Marsh picked me up at home and we headed to Stratford DOC office with two kiwi eggs on board. Sid had uplifted the two eggs the previous night at Aotuhia.

DOC required a copy of my driver's licence on record, and then, paperwork completed, I set forth in the DOC vehicle to drive smoothly and cautiously to Rotorua and Kiwi Encounter at Rainbow Springs. The trip usually takes about 4 hours and this one was no exception. Traffic was light and it was a lovely sunny day so the journey was very pleasant – and very uneventful. Keeping an eye on the temperature of the snugly wrapped and boxed eggs was the only task that needed regular attention, and the temperature was easily controlled via the vehicle's air conditioning system – or by opening a window.

On arrival at Kiwi Encounter at Rainbow Springs the eggs were delivered to staff who washed, weighed, measured, recorded and did a visual inspection via penlight through the egg shell to establish the stage of development of the eggs - most interesting. Each egg was assigned a number and all its details were recorded so its future developments can be charted. Eggs are placed in incubators to await hatching. Interestingly, there was a newly hatched kiwi chick in one of the hot-boxes visible from the viewing chamber. The return journey was as pleasantly uneventful as the outward leg, although the chosen route was different. No point in travelling the same road when there are alternatives now is there...?

If you get the opportunity to do a delivery run you should take it—it gives you an 'up close and personal' view of the work that is done for kiwi and is a nice way to spend a day. Let us know if you are interested in volunteering as a driver.

*Murray Sulzberger, Trustee*



*Newly hatched kiwi from ONE egg*



## TECHNICAL ADVISER'S REPORT



*Kris Grabow*

*The Taranaki Electricity Trust provides very welcome funding so TKT can employ a technical adviser. Kris reports on her early progress:*

Hi, I'm Kris Grabow, the latest addition to the Taranaki Kiwi Trust team. I started in October last year as the Trust's technical adviser and am really enjoying the variety of the role! I've been involved with the Hawera A & P show stand, kiwi dog aversion training, presenting school talks and attending kiwi releases. I look forward to meeting many of you along the way.

**Hawera A & P Show**—On the weekend of 17-18 November the Taranaki Kiwi Trust joined forces with DOC in holding a stand at the annual Hawera A & P show. Our display promoted the conservation of kiwi populations in Taranaki. Many people attended the show despite the wet weather. This provided a great opportunity to promote the Trust including the upcoming kiwi dog aversion training courses and the Community Kiwi Programme (providing stoat traps and assisting in trapping plans for private bush blocks in Taranaki). Our stand was adjacent to where Rudd Kleinpaste gave his talks throughout

the weekend, which boosted public interest – and ours too – throughout his shows! Unfortunately Snoopy, the live kiwi from Northland was 'grounded' due to bad weather at the airport, so he did not make his guest appearance. Regardless, spirits were not dampened, and all who made it seemed to enjoy the show.

**Kiwi Dog Aversion Training**—A kiwi aversion dog training weekend was held on 25-26 November. This is the second course the Trust has run. Jim Pottinger from National Park was the dog trainer. There was a great turnout, with 58 dogs being put through their paces! Approximately 20 of the dogs were re-sits from the course run 12 months previously. The course was held at Lake Mangamahoe and the training for each dog took less than 20 minutes.

We plan to run three more training weekends throughout the first half of this year. Dates are not finalised yet, but will be shortly. Keep an eye out on the TKT website for these. It is possible to run each weekend at a different location throughout Taranaki depending on demand, so we invite you to express your interest now.

**NB** The evening before training (24 Nov) Jim's ute was broken into and training gear stolen. This included kiwi carcasses, dog tattoo kit, comprehensive training records and unused permit forms. If anyone knows anything that could lead to the recovery of this gear please advise the Police, as much of this gear is very difficult to replace and is of no value to others.



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newplymouthnz.com

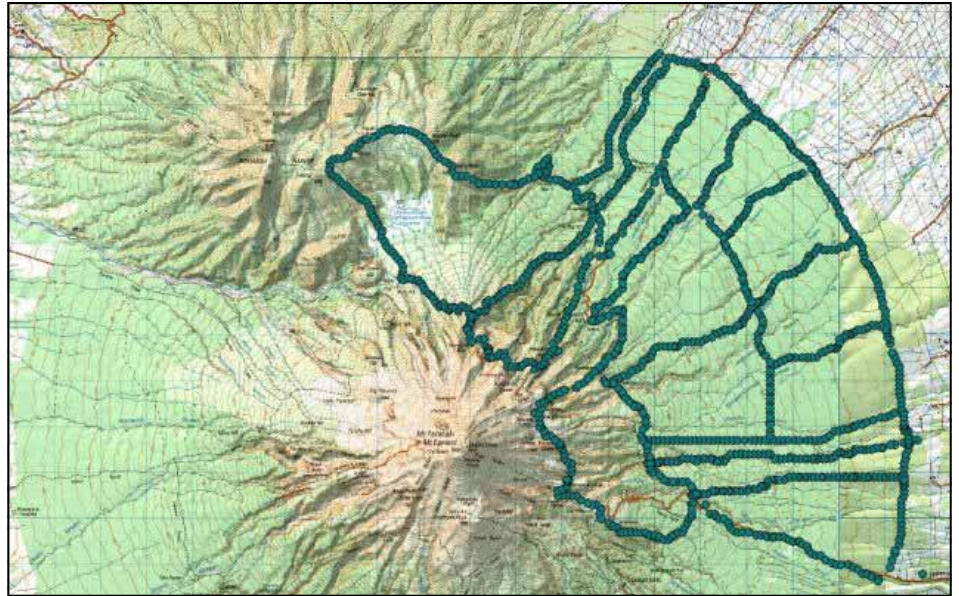
The NPDC generously supports the Taranaki Kiwi Trust





Trapping of kiwi predators in Egmont National Park has reached a monumental milestone; over 1000 stoats, the main predator of kiwi chicks, have been caught since August 2002. A combination of the prime stoat catching season and an extension of the trapping grid into the Pouakai Range has resulted in this impressive haul.

Catching the 1000th stoat is very significant. The sheer number of animals we're catching over time is what we expect, but it brings home the reality of the danger kiwi chicks face out there. It is reassuring to know that we are catching these critters. From the records we keep, it can be seen that we are at least holding the stoat population level, and possibly even getting on top of them over time. The big peak in



*ENP trap-lines map (December 2006)*



*DOC Trapper, Lyn Hassel, eyes up the 1000th stoat caught in Egmont National Park—photo by DOC*

catches every summer is normal; when young stoat kits leave the den and start roaming around we catch a lot of them. Stoats can have 6 to 8 kits every year. But looking at our long-term trends, as we are heading into our 5th summer, the peak stoat catches seem to be getting slightly lower each year.

The trapping grid was extended in October by adding a 13km section of the Pouakai Circuit with 129 double set trap boxes. This extension, funded by Pacific Development and Conservation Trust, adds about 1000ha to the trapping grid; this loop is on the NW of the grid (see map above).

Another 500ha extension of about 64 traps, funded by a Lotteries grant, was added to the southern end of the grid on Mt Taranaki. We

now trap 7500ha using 1164 stoat traps over 116 km of trap-lines.

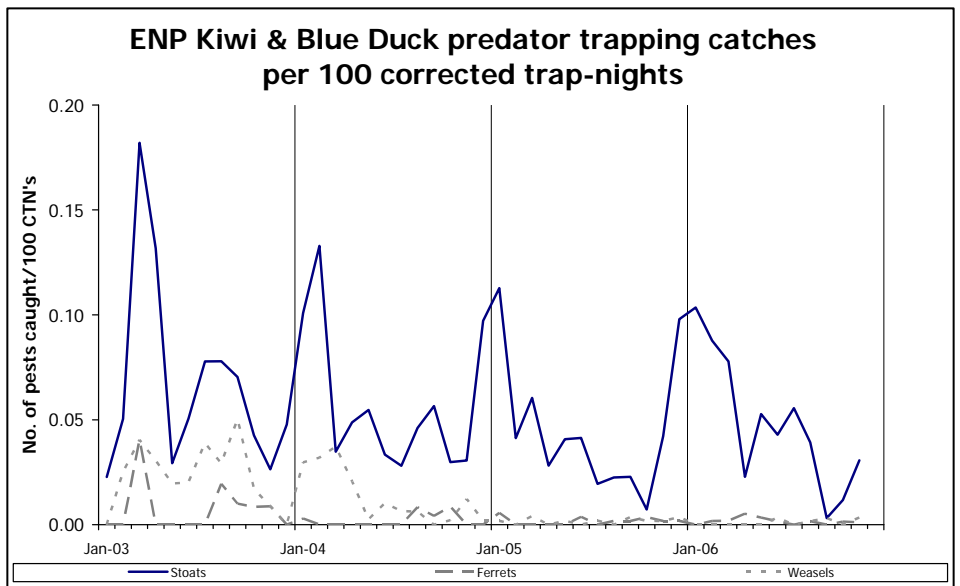
As we are expanding the programme over time, we catch more stoats. We account for this in our analyses by dividing the catch data by the number of traps out on the hill, and we account for traps that have accidentally gone off (catching nothing) and are not available to catch any pests until they are re-set. The graph below shows the relative number of animals trapped per 100 trap-nights; a standard way of looking at long-term trapping information.

Over 140 of the 1164 traps (12%) have been paid for by TKT supporters. These traps make up the TKT Community Trap Line.

*Cees Bevers, Trustee*

Total catches Aug 2002 to Dec 2006	
Stoats	1045
Ferrets	43
Weasels	109
Feral cats	16
Rats	4671
Hedgehogs	89
Rabbits	5
Hare	1

**Check out our website**  
[www.taranakikiwi.org.nz](http://www.taranakikiwi.org.nz)



YES! I'D LOVE TO HELP BY...

VOLUNTEERING SOME TIME

DONATING SOME MONEY

Name/s: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_

Please call me about volunteer work YES

**Yes!** I/we would like to help pay for checking traps in Egmont National Park (one year \$55, two years \$110, or other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes!** I/we would like to donate a trap-box for predator control to protect kiwi in Taranaki (trap-box(es) at \$65 each) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes!** I/we would like to donate money to be used where it's most needed to save kiwi in Taranaki \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donations over \$5 are tax-deductible

All donors become members of Friends of Taranaki Kiwi and will receive regular newsletters

Please send to: Taranaki Kiwi Trust, PO Box 867, New Plymouth 4340



## CHILDREN HELP KIWI IN EGMONT NATIONAL PARK

Children from the newly established Eco School in Lepperton decided to take action to protect kiwi following a visit from Taranaki Kiwi Trust's education co-ordinator, Carolyn Brough, late last year. The young pupils did chores to pay for a trap for the predator control project in Egmont National Park. The children came along to York Road-end on 6 December to present their donation and see a live kiwi, Cupid, before he was released into his permanent home on the mountain.

Cupid was the last of the chicks from the 2005/06 breeding season to be released. He didn't grow fast enough or big enough to be released in winter last year (and what a good winter to miss!). Cupid had a spell in Bushy Park's predator-free enclosure, and finally he grew big enough to be released into the wild. He will have a very good chance of surviving now that he weighs over a kilogram and his new home is intensively-trapped to remove stoats. Sam, the eldest pupil at the Eco School, held Cupid before Sid Marsh took the bird deep into the bush.



*Sam, from Eco School, Lepperton, holding Cupid*

Gemma and Kiwa from Hawera also got to hold Cupid after Gemma won a competition run by the Department of Conservation. Cupid looks placid and sleepy (maybe he fell asleep in Gemma's arms or maybe the light was just too bright for this nocturnal bird), but he actually has very strong legs and sharp claws, ideal for defence against predators (see photo on right).

Cupid has joined 15 other young kiwi that have been released in Egmont National Park under the BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust 'Operation Nest Egg'. The other birds are Tara, Naki, Dawson, Monty, Tahurangi, Ingle, Purangi,



*Gemma and Kiwa holding a sleepy Cupid*

Bayfield, Matau, Arawhata, Ford, Valentine, Orite, Toko and Anahera. There are 8 more chicks growing up in the kiwi crèche at Bushy Park, several more eggs and chicks at Kiwi Encounter at Rainbow Springs, Rotorua, and a number of second clutch eggs in monitored nests in the wild that will be uplifted in late January (see ONE summary table on the back page).

Many thanks to all our supporters, including those who sponsor traps on the 'community trap line' in the National Park, such as the Eco School children. You are helping make it a predator-free New Year for all these young kiwi.



*Sharp kiwi claws*



## BNZ OPERATION NEST EGG UPDATE



We are approaching the tail-end of kiwi breeding season, with just three or four egg-lifts remaining at Aotuhia. Amongst these is our first recorded third-clutch nest, belonging to the 'touchy' kiwi with the tomo hideout, 'TaKT'.

There are four Taranaki chicks at Kiwi Encounter at the moment, all making steady progress, including our first kiwi baby of 2007 which hatched 10 January. The eight chicks located at Bushy Park are growing in leaps and bounds, most have nearly doubled their weight since being liberated there in late October/early November. 'Big Kereopa' in particular is living up to its name, weighing in at 795gms - not bad for a three month old!

*Sue Caldwell, DOC Ranger*

ONE Chick	Location	Status	Last weight/Current weight (grams)	Sire
Te Whiti	Bushy Park	Alive	452 / 735	Titoko
Taumata	Bushy Park	Alive	416 / ?	Kimball
Koruarua	Bushy Park	Alive	396 / ?	Kingi
Kiokio	Bushy Park	Alive	384 / ?	Kingi
Piupiu	Bushy Park	Alive	373 / 645	Billdozer
Whakapono	Bushy Park	Alive	413 / 770	Caskey
Big Kereopa	Bushy Park	Alive	438 / 795	Kimball
Heketara (Beaky)	Bushy Park	Alive	352 / 550	Billdozer
Maioha	Kiwi Encounter	Hatched 18.11.06		TaKT
Waiata	Kiwi Heaven	Hatched (died)		Aitken
Mangahau	Kiwi Encounter	Hatched 3.12.06		Aitken
Horizon	Kiwi Encounter	Hatched 12.12.06		TaKT
TK.Km7	Kiwi Encounter	Hatched 10.1.07		Kimball
TK.Bd5 (egg)	Kiwi Encounter	Lifted 23.1.07		Billdozer
TK.Bd6 (egg)	Kiwi Encounter	Lifted 23.1.07		Billdozer



*Clockwise from left: Joe Carson lifting Billdozer's eggs; Kiwi Country—Purangi; Sid releasing Cupid in burrow; Jim thanking the children of Eco School, Lepperton; smiling stoat-trap sponsors*



**Donations are always welcome!**

Sponsor an existing trap in ENP (annual donation \$55)—or make a donation for a new trap box (\$65 each)